



ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥



Drug Addiction Totally Alien to Sikh Way of Life

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Distributed by
S. Gurcharn Singh of Mahim (Bombay)

Guru Nanak Dev Mission Series—455
Published by Guru Nanak Dev Mission, Bahera Road,
Mohalla Dhandoliwala, Patiala

Price : Rs. 3-00

PREFACE

This Tract written by Dr. Kundan Singh, M.Sc., Ph.D was first published by Guru Nanak Dev Mission as Tract No. 298. On account of demand of this tract by various persons it is being re-printed as Tract No. 455. Previously large number of copies of this tract were distributed by S. Gurcharan Singh of Mahim (Bombay). Now again he is distributing number of copies of this tract and the Mission is grateful to him for the same. The Mission is also thankful to Dr. Kundan Singh for writing this tract which will go a long way in saving number of Sikhs from Drug Addiction.

Drug Addiction Totally Alien to Sikh Way of Life

Addiction is one of the major international problems today. Despite the concerted efforts of World Health Organization (W.H.O.) and governments of several countries to keep effective check on it, the use of intoxicants is showing a steep rise year by year. Sikhs (particularly the youth) have not been able to stay immuned to the ambient situation. They have not simply fallen prey to it, are rather in the tight grip of the menace.

To blame Sikh youth alone shall amount to flinching away from the responsibility. It becomes of adults in a people to properly nurture the youth. We have utterly failed in this aspect of life. However, it would be too much to expect from the adult Sikhs to dissuade youth from intoxicants because they themselves are habituated to it in large numbers. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that many baptised Sikhs are given to drinking. Quite a percentage of Sikh leaders regularly take intoxicants and many are known to have been involved in drug pushing. It is common to see Sikhs drinking as soon as continuous recitation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib is over (Samapti of Akhand Path'. Illicit distillation goes on unabated in the countryside of Punjab, even with the connivance of law enforcing agencies in several cases.

Wine is variously nicknamed as the 14th Rattan (Gem) or the milk of tigress (as it relieves one from social restrictions) etc. But commendable was the wisdom of the person who jestingly designated it 'shar-abb' i.e. the water of mischief, that is what really it is.

A serious thought to the ever increasing menace of narcotics amongst the Sikhs is still awaited from any Panthic organization.

It is going to cost very dearly if we just slept over the problem. Situation is already getting out of hand in the countryside. May Satguru put us on the right path.

Intoxicants have been variously classified. For our purposes, they are generally of two types :

- a) Central nervous system stimulants like amphetamine and L.S.D.
- b) Central nervous system depressants as opium, cannabis preparations (Bhang), wine and tobacco etc. Latter are more prevalent.

There could be various etiological factors of drug abuse but following are the common ones.

1. Having fallen in wicked company and due to affluence of wealth, people initiate intoxicants for fun and frolics just as pastime. After sometime such individuals get bogged into the problem as a fish gets hooked after whelming the bait. Once they get trapped they cannot escape even if they like to. Such persons may dodge the family members for some time but ultimately the cat comes out of the bag.

2. Many persons initiate drugs just for getting a break from stresses and strains of routine life. Some loss, a quarrel, illness or death of a relative could be the cause of such dejection. To surmount such situations generally the prop of drinking (wine) is taken and it is called "writing off the worries." Gains and losses are very much a part of life. Gains are to be taken as blessings of Almighty and so are the losses which need to be overcome by Will power sought from Gurbani. Taking the aid of drugs in such situations means an open invitation to more and more complications.

3. Offspring of addicts are more prone to get hooked up to drugs because such parents take the drug abuse as a routine of life. Further, the parents generally serve as models for their children. Addicts are all praise for their habit and do not hesitate even to induce their children to drug use. An addict will recommend his drug for every ailment as it really is a panacea for him.

Ordinarily a person will leave no stone unturned to nurture his kids on right lines but it is an admitted fact that most of the addicts actuate their own sons to such vices. This is purposely done with two aims in sight, to escape the blame of bringing ruin to the family and drug user children shall make provisions for their old parents as well tomorrow.

4. In several instances young people are put on drugs un-awares, with the malicious intention of pulling down their family status and bringing disaster to them. In the beginning drug is supplied free till the fellow becomes hooked to it and afterwards he continues at his own.

This practice is not confined to individuals alone, even governments participate in such muddles with aim of weakening, capturing or economically exploiting other nations. For instance Portuguese merchants promoted the use of opium in China with the aim of economic gains. This and other exploitations led to an armed conflict leading to international regulation of opium trade by the League of Nations and at present United Nations. However drug trafficking is a flourishing international trade involving even highups.

5. Prolonged medicinal use of habit forming drugs may also end up in addiction. If used under medical supervision chances of drug dependence decrease. Misuse of analgesics (pain killers) and sleeping pills (generally habiturates) is notorious in this respect.

6 Interaction between people from distant areas has increased with improved means of communication, thus exchange of vices and virtues has also been facilitated. Debauchery of chewing tobacco and lime was unknown in Punjab two decades ago but this addiction has been acquired from agricultural labourers seasonally visiting Punjab from U.P. and Bihar. Though a prolific source of cancer, it is a thriving profligacy among Sikh youth.

7. Athletes and playes may take drugs to improve their performance and stamina. This illegal practice is called doping. Opiates, amphetamine, procaine and many other varieties of drugs have been abused for this purpose. After prolonged use of these

agents the individual becomes habituated ultimately.

8 Some people invent the plea that drinking is essential for healthy living at cold places as in the case of soldiers and may also claim that it keeps one in high spirits during fighting. But these claims get falsified when many soldiers living under same conditions do not drink at all without hampering their performance.

In short any justification for drugs' use indicates a lack of will power and determination. Mind control drugs are not yet commonly available. Change of food habits may effect the health of people as much as intoxicants. Sikhs have abandoned their traditional nutritious food articles like milk, curd and butter milk (Lassi) in favour of tea, which they do not consider to be an intoxicant. Infact tea is the one. Youth complains of muscle cramps if they take curd or Lassi.

Tea has been adopted from western world and China. In the begining it was offered free of cost by the tea companies to habituate the people. Now males and females of all age groups are "addicted" to it. Even village folk do not lag behind in the custom of bed tea. Sikh youth is almost forgetting about milk and milk products.

Tea is injurious to health in many ways. It suppresses growth of children as it lacks nutrients essential for the purpose. Children reared entirely on tea are weaklings usually and undersized. That is why the youth are small statured these days nicknamed as "pocket edition Khalsa". In western societies very little tea is offered to children during growth period.

Though a vast majority of people take tea the world over, it is harmful for adults as well. It contains low quantities of caffeine, theophylline and theobromine which stimulate the heart and may lead to high blood pressure and heart disease. Coffee being richer in these contents is still more dangerous. Tea almost lacks in nutritive value and suppresses appetite. Due to astringent action of its tannins, interferes with assimilation of normal food and induces constipation. Limitless drinking of tea results in excessive consumption of sugar which may lead to diabetes.

People in the villages sell nutritious milk at a nominal price and purchase tea instead, thus making a losing bargain. If given

option children commonly prefer to take tea because they are not acquainted with its harmful effects. People who regularly take milk are healthier and can work harder.

Due to the use of drugs and excessive tea intake, the health status of Sikhs is dwindling down. We do not see outstanding athlete and players amongst us as used to be the case years ago. Inspite of strict interdiction against the use of drugs in Sikh scriptures, one is puzzled to comprehend how the use of cannabis indica (variously termed Bhang, Sukha or Sukh Nidhan) crept into the staunch organization of Sikhs like Nihang Singhs (warriors).

It is not possible to discuss each and every intoxicant individually in a write up like this but a brief overall view of the problem is called for. In the following paragraphs an effort has been made to draw a sketch of the feelings of an addict which force him to make determined efforts to procure the enticement.

Typical feelings associated with comparatively low levels of drug use are enhancement of sensory pleasures which make the real world seem like an imaginary paradise. It aids the addict to compensate for his inability to cope with the responsibilities of psychological engagement with the problems of life. The addicts perceive to be procuring the derive and energy needed to succeed in tough competitive life. Gratification obtained by the addict must be immense particularly in view of the enormous sacrifices he makes to keep him supplied with the drug.

A regular uptake of opiates for some period creates physiological need for its continuation. Once the habitual consumption is stopped, a number of distressing symptoms show up. Severity being proportional to the period of addiction and the size and frequency of the dose. No matter how the drug was initially started, its continuous use leads to periods of artificially produced depression, mental and physical distress which disappear upon repetition of dosage. Three weeks of regular use produce the abstinence symptom which may become severe and even dangerous.

The notion that addict's inner life is serene and trouble free and he lives in a world of fantasy and dreams or that his life is

full of ecstasy is totally false. In fact average addict is a troubled, worried and harried person. In place of pleasure and ecstasy, misery, alienation and despair are the key features of his life. Due to heavy demands of addiction, he feels trapped by the unremitting rhythm of his habit. Without drug the life may appear intolerable. Tragedies seem to depress the user more than they normally should.

There is intense desire and striving for drug on the part of an addict. This craving is not vague or casual but a powerful conscious effort driving him to seek satisfaction in the face of almost insurmountable obstacles and at the price of unbelievable sacrifices. They allow nothing to stand between them and the drug. Majority of addicts have a tendency to increase the dosage of the drug beyond the bodily needs to get a good "kick" as the tissues get tolerant to it, also the drug pushers adulterate them to make more profit. Success in containing this tendency needs resolute and calculated self-control which is hard to find in addicts.

Under the influence of drug, an addict feels elated and in control of the problems of life which he cannot face without it. People take drugs for enjoyment which in turn raise a host of problems. Our ancestors took a dim view of anything that gave pleasure except the pleasure of prayer to Akal Purkh (The Timeless God, Almighty) and diligent labour. We may engage ourselves in the enjoyment of prayer, social work and games etc., which could be more productive and rewarding.

A majority of addicts sell off their properties to squander for drugs, leaving their families nothing more than destitutes. Many of them ultimately resort to stealing, deceitful acts and other social evils. In case the addict abandons drug consumption, he may revert to normal state of mental and physical health. But performance of such a feat needs to be backed up by a strong determination and will power which are seriously lacking in a vast majority of them. Rather they become slaves of their habit and can not resist the allurements of enhancing the drug dosage. Hence have to spend more and more for procuring drugs which leads to financial implications. Such individuals turn out to be a great affliction for the family because they give top priority to

their booze, ignoring rest of the liabilities. But to others it means superfluous wastage, because rest of the family have to face social and economic dilemma. A drunkard dad is a terror for children due to his aggressive behaviour and children generally shun such a father. Usually the brunt of wrath is borne by the wife and family lives a cat and dog life. Alcoholics have a tendency to have villainous behaviour under the pretext of being intoxicated. In contrast when a sober father comes home with a bagfull of edibles (fruit etc.) the children run to receive him with open arms. Such articles may be costing much less than the booze but are more nutritious and make the family a close knit unit rather than creating mistrust and panic. On pay day, rest of the families feel jubilant as it is their feast day, but the family of an addict keep shivering in their shoes till he returns home lest he may meet with an accident or get involved in a scuffle as he would be on drinking spree.

Not only the family members but relatives and neighbours as well get fed up with addicts and hate them. They often get secluded from rest of the community. Addiction does not create problems for the family alone but for the whole society. It may be conjectured not exactly calculated as to how many murders robberies, thefts, criminal assaults and other crazy acts are committed annually under the influence of intoxicants all the world over. Goodman and Gilman in their internationally recognized book on Pharmacology which forms not only the basis of medical, dental and veterinary practice but also the one for drug research, comment on drinking as under :

“Measured in terms of accidents, lost productivity, crime, death or damaged health, the combined social costs of problem of drinking in the United States have been estimated to exceed 150 billion dollars annually. The cost of broken homes, wasted lives, loss to society and human misery is beyond calculation. Babies born to mothers who drink heavily during pregnancy not only experience alcohol withdrawal after delivery but also in some cases are believed to suffer permanent mental retardation.”

It may seem that drinking is alien to women folks, in fact this vice is steadily catching up among the youth of both sexes.

Drunk drivers are a constant risk to passengers and passers by. Thrasher accidents during harvest are also a direct result of drug abuse.

The same authors narrate about smoking as follows :

"It has been estimated that 360,000 persons die annually in the United States because of tobacco use. The devastating statistical calculation has been made that one's life is shortened 14 minutes for every cigarette smoked. In epidemiological studies a positive correlation was observed between the incidence of lung cancer and cigarette smoking. The studies have shown that approximately 11 cigarette smokers die from cancer of the lung for each non-smoker who dies from the same cause."

We should be highly thankful to our Gurus who fore warned us and commanded us to strictly refrain from these menaces. It is hard to cite more from that book keeping in view the size of booklet but interested readers may have a panoramic view of the problem by reading more from the relevant portions of it.

Addicts lose strength, stamina and derive to work which in turn results in poverty, ignorance and wretched life. They are overtaken by sloth, lack of self confidence and demoralization. Choudhry Afzal Haq aptly described the working habits of smoking Muslim farmers and non-smoking Sikhs when he made an acute comment on their economic conditions. Though the Sikhs themselves may not have pondered on this issue, He wrote something like this in his urdu booklet referred at the end :

"The fields of the farmers who smoke give withered and deserted look due to the meagre labour they can put in, those of non-smoker farmers bloom and are highly productive. In the same village the Sikhs who do not smoke have a far better economic position compared to Muslim farmers who habitually smoke. Allah, Allah (O, God ! O, God !) there is a sprinkle of splendour in the fields of Sikhs and the ones of smoker Muslims are in ruins though the soil is of same quality."

Total interdiction of all intoxicants is a great gift of our Gurus to us but we have miserably failed to evaluate and honour this boon. As a result of this we have reached the disgusting

stage of finding many Sikhs smoking, chewing tobacco and drinking. Chaudhry a non Sikh could easily appreciate the secret of success of Sikh farmers. These comments are not pertinent to farming alone but are true in every walk of successful life.

May be one started intoxicants to forget worries, for fun or overcoming fatigue, ultimately lands in an enigma. With the help of intoxicants he wants to solve his problems but due to economic and other already discussed points, gets more and more entangled in difficulties. This is termed a "vicious circle" in technical terminology. It is exemplified as if a dog tried to catch the tip of his tail in his mouth which he cannot do, he shall keep circling in the vain effort and ultimately fall down exhausted. Exactly same is the plight of addicts. One may commonly hear that such and such addict liquidated all his property in pursuit of drug pranks and was ultimately compelled to take to begging. Having realised the morbid effects produced by addiction, Government, of many countries have enacted laws requiring liquor and tobacco companies to prominently display warnings like "Drinking or smoking is injurious to your health." But addicts forced by the vicious habit ignore all such warnings. There is a strange situation in that world of addicts. Normally no trader shall say that his merchandise is worthless and harmful. If he did so, no one would go in for such a bargain. For instance, a fruit seller shall not say that his melons are rotten and mouldy and are likely to cause cholera. But addicts have no options to make. They are simply driven by their habit.

Gurbani has pointed out the shortcomings of addiction and also laid down broad guidelines for refraining from them. Sikhs have ignored these instructions of late and that is why the present situation has arisen. Sikhism lays a great stress on self control, sacrifice and total abstinence from immoral acts. A Sikh is expected never to indulge in any pursuit for which he may have to repent later on.

ਸਾਥਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਾਲਿ ਕਿਉ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਈਐ ॥

ਐਸਾ ਕਮੁ ਮੂਲੇ ਨ ਕੀਚੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਅੰਤਿ ਪਛੋਤਾਈਐ ॥

(ਅਨੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰ. ੯੧੮)

Anything that wont accompany you, why to attention pay,

Do not pursue something for which ultimately repent you may. Only good deeds, service to mankind and prayer help one in the court of Almighty. Many people take to drugs or drinking to overcome the stresses and strains of daily life but Sikhism teaches one to spend his life with unshaken faith in the benevolence of Almighty Akal Parkh who is always kind to his creations. One must make all possible efforts to tackle the problems of life like disease etc. should be got treated according to ones financial capacity, living be earned by fair means (kirt), unfair means lead to more and more complications and tension, prayer should form part of routine life. Carefully understanding the instruction of Gurbani (Babek Budhi) relieves one of all worries. In case the difficulties still persist and death occurs, it should be accepted as the writ of Almighty instead of getting drowned in the ocean of intoxicants. Human beings have only limited powers and resources and they may mould the things within that frame work only. It creates problems when humans want and assert that every event of life should go according to their wishes, only beneficial things should happen, not obnoxious ones. If we submit to His "Bhana" after making our due efforts, the problem gets solved right away and we escape further complications.

Gurbani (sacred revelation) instructs that all of the happenings are pre-ordained and we cannot do much to mould them.

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਕਾਲੈ ਵਸਿ ਹੈ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਹਿ ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਥੀਐ ਇਨਾ ਜੋਤਾ ਵਸਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ (55)

Under His order we go in jaws of death or may live truthful life if He may consecrate.

O' Nanak whatever He likes happens, humans can nothing destroy or create.

A Sikh is ordained to muse in the all prevailing Will (Bhana) of Akal Parkh.

ਬੋਲਹਿ ਸਾਚੁ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਨਾਹੀ ਰਾਈ ॥ ਚਾਤਹਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ॥

(227)

Speaks truth, falsehood never even a grain

In Almighty's command (Guru's) disciple shall ever remain.

"Gur Bani" (sacred revelation) commands that one attains

salvation by willingly submitting to Almighty's Will alone, even if some one tried to evade it and find alternative means, he virtually receives slaps on his face.

ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੀ ਭਾਣੈ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਹੋਰੁ ਆਖਿ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਖਾਇਕੁ ਅਖਣਿ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਤੀਆ ਮੁਹਿ ਪਾਇ ॥ (5)

Redemption (one) may attain through His Will alone

Alternative to it can say no one

If a fool may dare to say

He knows how many slaps get he may.

ਜੇ ਪੁਰੁ ਕਰੈ ਸੋਈ ਭਲ ਮਾਨਹੁ ਸੁਖਿ ਦੁਖਿ ਓਹੀ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਰੇ ॥

Whatever He does, as a blessing take we may.

But self-willed human beings try to be clever and refuse to submit to Almighty's will and strive to find a solution to their worries and mental problems with the aid of intoxicants, consequently land in more and more complications like enhanced expenses, dwindling stamina for hard work and increased vulnerability to worries. Along with these, drug habituation tightens its grip and forces the poor fellow to procure more and more of the intoxicant (even intoxicants). Addicts ultimately become slaves of their habit. Habit is a good servant but a bad master. In case a Sikh is accustomed to rising up early in the morning, brushing his teeth, early morning bath and to attending sacred congregation (Satsang) the habit is his servant and lucky he is. Contrarily, if habit forces him to procure the booze at any cost then it is a treacherous master.

Addicts are enslaved by the drugs or intoxicants to which they totally surrender. Such fellows seriously lack self respect or human dignity and get prepared to do anything possible to obtain their bait. Gurbani commands in plain words that one must refrain from pleasures (intoxicants) because such sensual approbations are a source of untold sufferings :

ਸਾਦ ਕੀਤੇ ਦੁਖ ਪਰਫੁੜੇ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਲਿਖੇ ਮਾਇ ॥

ਸੁਖ ਥੋੜੇ ਦੁਖ ਅਗਲੇ ਦੁਖੇ ਦੂਖਿ ਵਿਹਾਇ ॥ (989)

Due to the deeds, plunge into afflictions if (we) indulge in pleasures.

May be few comforts, but life is spent in miseries without measures.

ਤਜਿ ਸਾਦ ਸਹਜ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਘਰ ਛਡਣੇ ਰਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥ (989)

Quit pleasures intuitive comforts shall you attain,
Forsaking the Real House (God's shelter) no one may remain.

In case a person goes lunatic, all his relatives feel upset and sad about it, spend huge amounts to get him treated and put him back on the normal track of life. But one fails to understand why people get seduced to insanity of drugs. By spending their fortune, what gains they foresee in this game ? Gurbani forbids the use of intoxicants in strong words and warns against the evil results of treading on this path :

ਮਾਣਸੁ ਭਰਿਆ ਆਇਆ ਮਾਣਸੁ ਭਰਿਆ ਆਇ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਪੀਤੈ ਮਤਿ ਦੂਰਿ ਹੋਇ ਬਰਲੁ ਪਵੈ ਵਿਚ ਆਇ ॥
ਆਪਣਾ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨ ਪਛਾਣਈ ਖਸਮਹੁ ਧਕੇ ਖਾਇ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਪੀਤੈ ਖਸਮ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਦਰਗਹ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ ॥
ਬੁਠਾ ਮਦੁ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਪੀਚਈ ਜੇ ਕਾ ਪਾਰ ਵਸਾਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਸਚੁ ਮਦੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਆਇ ॥ (554)

Man is pervaded (with sins), becomes so more and more,
Drinking which, sagacity disappears, insanity creeps in sure,
(One) fails to discriminate kin and alien, from Lord gets severe jolt,
Drinking which (one) neglects the Master, gets chastised in His court,
Never take false intoxicants, salvation if you wish to attain,
O ! Nanak true intoxication is contemplation if true Guru's blessing one may obtain.

One should not indulge in addiction, it is prohibited because it makes one lethargic and idler, dissuades from prayer and routine work of life and instead prompts one for joys and immoral deeds. Pursuit of delights results in immoral deeds. All these lead to a bad end.

ਪਾਨ ਸੁਪਾਰੀ ਖਾਤੀਆ ਮੁਖਿ ਬੀੜੀਆ ਠਾਈਆ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਚੇਤਿਓ ਜਮਿ ਪਕੜਿ ਚਲਾਈਆ ॥ (726)

(Those) chew betel nuts, enjoy tobacco puff

Never pray Almighty, shall be caught by death's angel rough.

True bliss is attained by meditating on Akal Purkh through Gurbani and doing virtuous deeds. Pleasure of intoxicants is fake and useless according to Sikh tenets. Sometimes not only common people but even Sikh preachers are heard to say that such and such intoxicant is prohibited and so and so is not, thus creating a lot of misunderstanding and confusion. For instance some one may say L.S.D. is not prohibited as it is a modern introduction to the intoxicant arsenal. But Sikhism gives decisions, not suggestions on all aspects of life and dependable guidance can only be sought from Gurbani. Intoxicants arouse sensual pleasures and have been condemned in any form they may be used for futile purposes. Some Sikhs say they drink wine as a medicine. That is also a lame excuse to justify drinking and an effort to mitigate the sin. Wine as such is not used as a remedy. A Sikh is to seek pleasure by contemplating on Almighty through recitation of Gurbani or simply Sat Naam, Wahe Guru (True is your name O ! Wonderful Lord).

ਪੂਰਾ ਸਾਚੁ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਸਹਜੇ ਤਿਸਹਿ ਪੀਆਏ ਜਾ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ॥

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕਾ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਕਿਆ ਮਦਿ ਛੁਛੈ ਭਾਉ ਧਰੇ ॥ (360)

Cupful of ecstasy may offer to whom He becomes kind,
A merchant of ambrosia, hollow intoxicants why should mind.

ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਦੁ ਜੋ ਪੀਵਤੇ ਬਿਖਲੀ ਪਤਿ ਕਮਲੀ ॥

ਰਾਮ ਰਸਾਇਣਿ ਜੋ ਰਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚ ਅਮਲੀ ॥ (399)

Those taking evil inducing drugs have a mad form of addiction.

Those soaked in essence of meditation have true benediction.

In the Sikh code of conduct Bhai Chaupa Singh advocates addiction to the bread alone since one can not live without food but can do much better without intoxicants.

An organised and sustained campaign is urgently called for to

dissuade Sikh youth from taking to addiction. They need to be educated about the delinquency and ultimate devastating results of addiction. Group lectures and booklets on the subject can serve a very useful means to bring home the desired purpose. A small library attached to each Gurdwara can go a long way in preaching against these evils. Alongwith spiritual development, games and sports are equally essential for physical development and have been very much a part of Sikh life. This mode of life has been in vogue since the time of Gurus and Gurdwara "Mal Akhara" (Wrestlers Arena) in Khudpur Sahib stands monument to the tradition. Here Guru Sahib used to watch the Sikhs wrestling and playing games. These days physical and spiritual aspects of life are both being badly ignored and hence we are facing drug problems and indiscipline. Fencing (Gatka) exists only as a vestige. Among to-days Sikhs, only very few might be practising it.

Like the old saying "Idle man's brain is devil's workshop" slothful Sikh youth start thinking of drugs and related evils to while away their time, in the absence of requisite guidance from the mature generation. Hence the parents and teachers can give the youth proper lead, if they themselves set example by refraining from drugs and adopting productive pursuits. But quite a percentage of parents and teachers themselves are stranded in the muddle of intoxicants, thus serving very poor models for the youth.

Alongwith preaching Sikh philosophy and history, games should be popularized among the youth. For this purpose every area should have its own voluntary preachers and game instructors. Help from outstanding scholars may be sought by arranging big preaching camps, where tournaments should be arranged alongwith religious preaching. To popularise games among the youth, existing sports clubs be strengthened and new ones initiated. These steps can help quite a bit in ridding the youth from the curse of drugs. Players start caring for their health as they think in terms of competing with others in physical standards and refrain from evil habits. A healthy young man is also an asset to the family since he can do more hard work.

Khalsa college Amritsar used to be the venue of games and sports of Khalsa schools during Diwali festival, it was named Diwali tournament. Somehow it has been discontinued since partition. Such tradition may beneficially be revived.

People will start hating the intoxicants only if they are enlightened about their obnoxious effects. If we keep looking at the Govt. to effectively enforce prohibition, it shall amount to hoping against hope. Bootleggers start clandestine trade as is the case of opium and other intoxicants at present. Also Governments earn billions of rupees through excise duty. Only way to withstand the onslaught of intoxicants is the wilful hatred against this profligacy. Religious preaching should also become the subject of Sikh masses as the people responsible for it, may be having personal ends dearer than preaching.

It shall be a great relief to the families of addicts and service to Panth if an organization (s) may wean away these misguided fellows from this debauchery. Such a step shall change despair of many families into hope, broken families into well-knit and successful ones, troubled families into serene ones. Dangerous and hateful drunkards may be converted into saints who could also do social welfare work as Guru Nanak Dev converted Sajjan, the cheat and Bhoomelia, the thief into good Sikhs and preachers.

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Tract No. 455 printed with the help and co-operation of :—

1. Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Patiala.
2. Shri Guru Singh Sabha Piru Manoor Cochin.
3. Gurbani Parchar Kender, Hoshiarpur.
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